

World Forestry Day & World Environment Day celebration at Guindy Children's Park, Chennai

Guindy Children's Park has number of rare and endangered species exhibit in its collection. The zoo inmates are scientifically managed for successful captive breeding and to reach the high standard of wildlife conservation measures.

The *ex-situ* wildlife captive breeding centre has remarkable annual visitation. Particularly academicians in large number to visualize the biodiversity centre to know the detailed information about the fauna and flora to meet out their curriculum level on every year. The enthusiastic education section of this park has number of education modules to impart eco-education to the various age groups for throughout the year at different intervals.

The park has calendar of eco education programme for every year. The identified programmes of World Forestry Day was conducted on 22 March 2017 and World Environment Day on 5 June to create awareness and value of biodiversity and their shrine role for the well being of healthy environment and the human participation to protect the vital natural resources.



A school student actively participating in the interactive session during World Forestry Day celebrations



Inspiring young minds showcase their drawing skills on environmental protection

Around 50 members attended the interactive session of the WED 2017. The participants who took part in the awareness programmes raised their eyebrows after receiving the eco-education on different types of ecosystem, viz., especially on variety of forest ecosystem, category of aquatic and marine ecosystem etc., which supports for the comfortable life style for the day-to-day life. Later they participated in a drawing competition. As a part of encouragement the participants were given study material and refreshment and they gave impressive feed back on the day's event.

World Forest Day was celebrated at the park auditorium to the zoo visitors. They are family members, professionals, college students and peer group. They were focussed on importance of environment and its role on

conservation of biodiversity.

The interactive session was quite interesting and they were enriched with on the role of *ex-situ* and *in-situ* conservation centre's role in wildlife conservation through a presentation. The active participants were shown great concern and interest especially on the existence of Guindy National Park in the metropolitan city and its shrine role in generating purified oxygen to the city dwellers for hale and healthy environment.

My sincere thanks to Ms. K. Geethanjali, I.F.S., Wildlife Warden-Chennai for the constant encouragement and support

**Submitted by: N. Baskar,
Biologist.
Email: nbrzoo@yahoo.com**

World Elephant Day celebration at Government Arts College, Udhgamandalam, TN



Wildlife Biology students wore the elephant masks supplied by ZOO and went on a rally inside the college campus to spread awareness on elephant conservation

On 12 August 2017, World Elephant Day was celebrated to highlight the need for Elephant conservation. The first author organized the program in collaboration with Zoo Outreach Organization. Students from the division of Wildlife Biology participated. They wore ZOO's elephant masks and went for a rally within the college campus. This was followed by a series of lectures.

B. Ramakrishnan, Assistant Professor in Wildlife Biology delivered a talk on "Role of elephants and Conservation Strategies". In his talk, he defined an elephant corridor as the "Narrow strip of forests connecting two habitats that facilitate major functions such as exchange of gene between populations, dispersal, provide access to a variety of seasonal foraging grounds, and prevention of faunal collapse. In the introductory speech he mentioned that the elephant play a vital role in the forest ecosystem as a "Keystone Species" and elephant conservation is biodiversity conservation. He also stressed that the-anthropogenic pressures, land use and land cover change over few decades

and various forms of developmental activities pose a severe threat to the continuity of forests in most of the elephant ranges, affecting the long term survival of the species which require large forest tracks. In this situation investigation on various aspects of corridors become essential and it's appropriate and indispensable to develop a management plan to enhance the smooth functioning of the corridors for the sustainability of this species.

M. Ilakkia, Research Scholar talked about "Important of nutritive values on feeding behaviour of elephants". She said that elephants are known to feed on a wide variety of plant species. Elephant use the soft twigs of the trees by removing the leafy portion from it bark from the woody plant is often ripped off for feeding purpose. Since bark is rich in calcium, elephants would select this resource, which is sometimes essential for the favourable growth of the skeleton and for the tusks in males. She explained that the food consumed in the wild is low in nutrients and high in fiber hence more information is needed on their feeding biology to properly

develop management strategies for their conservation. Therefore, management practices are needed to conserve the elephants' habitat for their long-term survival.

S. Karthick, Research Scholar delivered a presentation on "Human Elephant Conflict and Mitigation strategies". He explained that the management of human-elephant conflict is one of the important challenges to the forest managers in all elephant ranges. This is mainly due to the habitat preference of elephants for the availability of food, water, and shade. These resources vary in space and time, and hence elephants show distinct habitat preferences with changes in season. The movement pattern of elephants is severely hampered by both biotic and abiotic activities and thereby elephants are forced to extend their traditional range and raid crops. During such forays, destruction to properties, killing of humans by elephants and death of elephants by human activities is not uncommon and become a serious conservation issues. The increase in human population and the shrinkage of habitat, coupled with over-exploitation of natural resources have been mentioned as the major factors responsible for the increased crop raiding incidences by elephants in India. The increased probability of crop raiding incidents has led to an anti-conservation attitude in the minds of people. Therefore, use of various mitigating measures to protect their crops and properties is need of the hour. Many different approaches have been used to mitigate conflict between elephants and people at different levels.

H. Mohanakrishnan, Assistant Professor delivered a talk on "Task force for the conservation of Elephants". Rapid developmental activities along with the encroachment into the deeper forest regime have made them survive less, basically due to loss of their natural habitats. On account of their rapidly declining natural habitat and shrinking of migratory routes and feeding grounds the elephant population often succumb to various modes of unnatural deaths like train accidents, electrocution deaths, and road accidents, and as a result, their population is falling rapidly. In this situation, there is a need for integrated approaches for some applied action oriented research studies, which may provide database about ground facts that will be useful in achieving the goal of biological diversity conservation especially in conserving wildlife species that are categorized under threatened category.

P. Kannan, Assistant professor gave vote of thanks. This action

oriented celebration reached out to about 1500 students belonging to various departments as well as representatives from Masinagudi, Kundha, Sholur, Sholur mattam and Gudalur surrounding areas which are considered to be the high human elephant conflict areas in the Nilgiris Landscape. We thank Mr. R. Marimuthu and Dr. B. A. Daniel from Zoo Outreach Organization for the support. We thank all the press and media for the dissemination of this message very well to the public.

Submitted by: Ramakrishnan, B., M. Ilakkia, S. Karthick and A. Samson. Emails: bio.bramki@gmail.com, kingvulture1786@gmail.com



The entire team which took part in World Elephant Day celebration

World Environment Day celebration at Alagarkovil Hills, Madurai



Green Club members with cleared garbage for disposal

The Green Club of the American college and District Forest Office, Dindigul division jointly commemorated the world environment Day at Alagarkovil Hills on 5, June 2017. The programme World Environment Day was inaugurated by Dr. M. Davamani Christofer, Principal. Mr. D. Venkatesh I.F.S, District Forest Officer, Dindigul division, M. Rajesh, Secretary, Green Club and students from American College planted saplings in Alagarkovil hills. Then more than 25 students from the club removed polythene bags, tumblers littered on the pathway of 10 km which lead to Alagarkovil temple. They collected 15 gunny bagful of polythene wastes and disposed properly. Students also educated the pilgrimage, public not to throw plastic/polythene wastes on the roadside.

*Submitted by: M. Rajesh, Asst. Professor, Dept. of Zoology,
The American College, Madurai. Email: lillyrajesh@yahoo.com*